

HISTORY
of the
FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
of
Charlotte, N. C.



Robert A. Dunn, LL.D.

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CHARLOTTE, N. C.



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HISTORY
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FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
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OF
Charlotte, N. C.

By
ROBERT A. DUNN, LL.D.

November, 1932





First Presbyterian Church
Charlotte, N. C.

The Father . . . hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we have redemption through His blood, even to forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.

And He is the head of the body, the Church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence.

COL. 1:12-18.

Introduction

By JAMES A. JONES, D.D.
*Pastor of the Myers Park
Presbyterian Church*

This history by Dr. Dunn was prepared at the request of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, North Carolina, and was read by him to the congregation in November 1932, upon the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of the Church's organization. The decision by some of his friends to have it published is a very wise one. With unusual excellence the story of the Church is told. Just as there is more by far to the life of any Church than facts and figures, there is more to this history than the bare narration of detail. Insights are given into the ministry of the Church with an accuracy and discernment that spring only from the heart of one who greatly loved and was loved by his church.

Dr. Dunn was eminently qualified to perform the task given to him. A Ruling Elder of the congregation for over fifty years, exercising leadership in its affairs, devoted with fullness of heart to its service in the community and the Kingdom of God, he brought to the work native talents of excep-

tional capacity and devotion which made his careful and prolonged research into the Sessional records a labor of genuine love. Beyond this he shared in much of the story himself. He knew, as few, if any, now know, by intimate experience the personalities involved in so much of the story. Those who are just "names" to us were friends and confederates to him. Their natures and deeds are seen again through the eyes of one who was with them.

The creative power of God is often illustrated by the dissimilarity of His creatures. Snowflakes with the same angles have their individuality. The thousand leaves on a tree's limb have peculiarities that set each one apart. No two people are alike. So it is with organizations and institutions. Each group has traits all its own. Business houses and clubs of all sorts have distinctive marks. This general truth is doubly true in churches. Every congregation, itself a handiwork of God, preserves its exceptional characteristics.

Here is the story of a Church whose work has had a vital share in shaping the moral and spiritual life of this community, and it is told by one who contributed in no small measure to the whole work of the Church itself. His interest and efficiency in the eco-

nomie and cultural life of his city and state were exceeded only by his never failing zeal for the ongoing of the Kingdom of Christ. I am sure that the comment Dr. Dunn would make about this whole story would be the word which he evidenced often by nature and conviction in the private engagements of a busy life, in the affairs of a local church, in the functioning of a whole denomination over whose Assembly he had presided as Moderator, and in the upward sweep of the Will of God on the earth—"See what God hath wrought."

Impressions

By REV. JOHN G. GARTH

It is a great pleasure to read again this attractive story of the First Presbyterian Church, of Charlotte, N. C., written by Dr. R. A. Dunn, for so many years an officer in the church, and a faithful attendant at the services, and an inspiring auditor of the pastor.

I heard Dr. Dunn read this account which is printed in this little book at the meeting of Mecklenburg Presbytery in the First Church in April, 1934. It is a standing rule of the presbytery that a history of the entertaining church shall be read at the meeting, and Dr. Dunn was carrying out the order of business.

I have a very vivid mental picture of Dr. Dunn standing on the pulpit platform, reading the paper for the information of the brethren. He read with a clear voice, and as he made comments on the ancient forms and customs, so different from those of our own day, the twinkle of his eye, and the humor of his voice caused many smiles on the faces of his hearers.

Since the First Church holds a unique place, not only in the history of the Presbyterian Church in this section, but as the

first church in the town, this story so well told, deeply affects our emotions. This great square in the heart of the city, with its towering trees, its graceful walks, the stately spire piercing the skies, like a sentinel calling the attention of the people to the presence of God, and the churchly building that seems to breathe with the worship of Almighty God, have now for a century and a quarter stood as the symbol of Christian faith.

The memories of Godly men and women who entered this house of worship, and the recollections of the ministers, distinguished for scholarship and eloquence, whose leadership guided the generations to God, are vividly told by Dr. Dunn, and he has made us his debtors for these hallowed associations which will abide in our minds and hearts, because of his patient investigation and his skillful portrayal of these pictures of the old paths. May we walk in them.

May, 1945.

History of the First Presbyterian Church OF Charlotte, N. C.

By ROBERT A. DUNN, LL.D.

NOVEMBER, 1932

About the year 1735 a race of people differing in customs, forms of religious worship and doctrinal belief from the first settlers of North Carolina, came in two streams to this State. Scotch Irish Presbyterians from the North of Ireland came, largely through Pennsylvania and then through Virginia, to the Piedmont section of North Carolina, passing on from Virginia because of its stricter laws applying to the worship of God. About the same time the Scotch Highlanders, holding the same faith, coming in mainly through Wilmington and Charleston, settled on the Cape Fear River and grew into a widespread colony up and down the Cape Fear Valley.

To us who have pictured all of this eastern division of our country as covered by virgin forest, it is a strange fact that two hundred

History and records of the period are the sources from which I have gathered information.—R. A. DUNN.

years ago there was little forest land in the section between the Dan and Catawba Rivers. Instead, there existed vast prairies and fertile land covered with deep, luscious grass suitable for grazing cattle. The climate was mild—the land low in price. The Catawba Indians were comparatively quiet and peaceful. Finding here, also, freedom of worship which they held most important, the thrifty Scotch Irish people, not unused to hardship, began to make their homes.

Very soon, in every community, preaching points were established, at which Presbyterian ministers served by regular and occasional appointments. Although communication and travel were difficult, it was not an uncommon thing for these people to attend religious services fifteen and twenty miles from their homes. This resulted in important spiritual development, culminating in the organization of strong Country Churches, for the wealth and culture of that time were largely found in the country.

A group of seven Churches, Sugar Creek, Providence, Steel Creek, Hopewell, Center, Poplar Tent and Rocky River, were organized in the period between 1755 and 1765. These formed a circle around Charlotte, nearly all being in Mecklenburg County. Famous men ministered in their services,

including Alexander Craighead, S. C. Caldwell (it is written he served one charge thirty-five years and had eleven children), John Robinson, R. H. Morrison, founder of Davidson College, and others. All were eminent men who would make an impression on any generation.

The town, Charlotte, was only a village which George Washington described as being a rather poor sort of place, at best insignificant, contemptible.

As people increased, so did the bad roads, and more churches had to be provided. This was the condition in the country districts but the village of Charlotte had no church. The country churches became interested in establishing a church in the town, the communities being inter-dependent and at first a union Church was erected by the people of the town on ground given for the purpose by the town Commissioners, and all the denominations represented in Charlotte worshipped in it, each being allotted a specified time. The Presbyterians formed a compact congregation in these early years and expected to become soon a fully equipped Church.

In 1821 they applied to Concord Presbytery for oversight and care which were duly accorded, and certain of its ministers were

sent to preach to this congregation at stated times.

Prior to 1826 the congregation was supplied several years by Rev. S. C. Caldwell, Pastor of Sugar Creek Church, who gave it one-fourth of his time.

In 1827 Dr. Morrison was preaching at both Sugar Creek Church and Charlotte, receiving \$400.00 from Sugar Creek and \$200.00 from Charlotte that he might "be free from worldly cares." (If some of you preachers meet that price and preach good sermons, you might get some bids now.) But money was not all. Hams and hens were not 30c a pound then, and many fat hens and fine hams found their way to the Manse. We don't give our preacher much produce as we prefer to keep him thin.

Union Churches have rarely been successful, and each of the denominations looked forward to the time when they might have their own organization and home.

The First Presbyterian Church of Charlotte was organized in August, 1832.

I quote from a draft by the late J. Harvey Wilson, an honored elder of the First Church:

(J. Harvey Wilson lived from Oct. 7, 1810, to Sept. 13, 1884. A lawyer, living when the First Presbyterian Church was organized

and the property purchased by the Presbyterians, one of the five trustees who received the grant from the Commissioners of the town, he wrote with legal exactness from personal knowledge of the purchase of the property from the "corporate authorities."—Editor.)

"The property now owned by the First Presbyterian Church was donated by the Commissioners of the town to citizens thereof for the purpose of being improved by them to give accommodation for religious services to all denominations, the title thereto being retained by said Commissioners. The town's population was about 300, and there was no Church of any denomination in the place. The citizens of the town undertook the erection of a Church building of brick. The principal contributors were Presbyterians, consisting mainly of William Davidson, John Irwin, William Smith, William Carson and others. In erecting the Church, an indebtedness of about \$1,500 had been incurred. (This usually occurs.—R.A.D.) This amount was borrowed from the Bank of Newbern, and note of the Commissioners of the town was made upon the ground that the title to the property thus improved was retained by the corporate authorities. Incidentally, it was said that interest at the

rate of 18% was paid. The debt became a burden, and the Presbyterians offered to pay the debt, if the authorities would convey the title to them." This was done and the Church has a deed to the property.

When the First Presbyterian Church of Charlotte was organized in 1832, there were 36 members enrolled. One of the early reports mentions 13 colored members. At this time, Dr. R. H. Morrison was pastor of both the Charlotte Church and Sugar Creek Church, the combined membership of which was 242, or about 500, says another account. About this time, there was a notable revival of religion, Dr. Morrison being the leader, assisted by Rev. A. J. Leavenworth of the Presbyterian Church and Messrs. Furman and Barnes of the Baptist Church. A very cordial relation has always existed between the Presbyterian, Baptist and Methodist Churches in Charlotte, as is further evidenced in the later pages of this sketch. This is, also, true of churches of other denominations which came later.

In 1833 Dr. Morrison withdrew as pastor and Rev. Abner J. Leavenworth became Stated Supply, and the following year Mr. Leavenworth became pastor. He was succeeded in 1834 by Dr. R. H. Morrison. It is

interesting to note that Dr. Morrison, Dr. A. W. Miller and Dr. Alexander Sinclair were each pastor of this church at two different periods.

At an early date, Prayer Meeting was held every Friday night, later being changed to Thursday night and finally, seemingly permanently, established on Wednesday night.

The Church began in enthusiasm and hope but, in the short period of a year, interest in things religious had subsided to an unfortunate extent and the year 1833 saw a depleted condition. About this time, a monthly Concert of Prayer for Missions was put into effect and the state of religion commenced to improve.

In 1834 the strange fact is recorded that two men elected Elders refused to serve, giving no reasons and declining on the date set for installation, and no explanation is ever given of their conduct.

Rev. F. K. Nash was called to the pastorate in 1841 and was offered \$450.00. It is recorded that he declined the call. Rev. Mr. Freeman of Georgia was then employed as Stated Supply and was paid \$500.00 and a house. He continued with the church for three years.

Interspersed through the records are bits which supply the spice. In giving the ac-

count of the death of one of the members, the Session expressed itself this way, "We hope our loss is his gain." There seems to have been a little uncertainty about this.

In May, 1846, the Rev. Cyrus Johnson was installed as pastor. The report to Presbytery the following year gave the number of members as 54 white and eight colored. Its total Benevolent Collections were \$121.00. This did not include Congregational and Pastoral Expenses. The reports show that in 1850 or 1851 the membership had increased to the number of 80.

Discipline was administered without fear or favor and some names rather familiar to us were at times made prominent by requests of the Session for their appearance before it. On one occasion four members attended a Town Ball. Official action was taken by the Session, which was so forcible, that two immediately professed repentance with promises for the future and the other two left town. Drunkenness, profanity and some lesser evils were not lightly passed over.

At one time when one of our honored Elders was Superintendent of the Sunday School, a hymn number was given out. Request was made for the repetition of the number, as some in attendance had not heard distinctly, and the Superintendent replied

that, if they were not paying attention and did not hear the number, they would have to do without it. A mild case of discipline.

In 1849 there was a greatly revived interest in the Church and its work, and an unusual number were added to the Church. It is of interest to note that a week of special services resulted in a gracious revival, the pastor being assisted by Rev. B. A. Penick and Rev. Walter Pharr.

Presbytery met in the Church in 1850, and the Deacons were commended particularly for attending to the material needs of this Court. That year there were added on examination 27 and by certificate eight. The total number of members had now reached 80 white and eight colored.

An incident showing the cordial relationship between the denominations is that the Presbyterian Church joined with the Methodist Church in making a contribution of \$50.00 to Bible Cause. To Education and Publication, Foreign and Domestic Missions the Presbyterians at this time were contributing \$159.00. The pastor's salary is seldom mentioned but we can form some idea of the lucrative position he occupied by noting the amounts paid by other churches. One of our neighboring churches of greater financial strength was paying \$450.00 a year and

another made a contract to pay a fair salary but specified that the minister must pay for six pews. There seems to have been a slight amount of Scotch blood in that congregation.

In November of the year 1850 a virulent type of smallpox appeared in Charlotte and nearby sections and afflicted the community for more than a year. Some of the doctors called it "Varicella" but, when hair and skin were lost and finger nails began to come off, they changed their diagnosis. Excitement and terror were manifested and there were some who did not want to believe that God would allow such an affliction. Many stores were moved from the town into the country and other places quarantined against Charlotte. The Church was closed for a short period and when services were again held, the attendance was small. The account of this loathsome epidemic was so vivid and intense, that I found myself washing my hands twice while reading it.

In 1850 the Benevolences amounted to \$339.00. The sexton received \$40.00 for a year's services. A note states that many subscriptions were made but not collected in full, and that a debt of \$161.00 existed for which there were no funds available. In 1851 this debt was paid in full and a movement inaugurated to erect a new Church. Com-

plaint was made at that time that the congregation is "too much at ease in Zion, careless, indifferent, and conforming to the world."

The Clerk of the Session evidently came to the Presbyterian Church from the Methodist Church, as at this point in the records he called the Session "The Board of Stewards."

The pastor was promised \$619.00 and received \$440.00. I cannot find any mention of the liquidation of this difference. I note, too, that the sexton received only \$36.00 of his \$40.00.

The increasing congregation began to tax the seating capacity of the Church and desire was expressed for additional pews. It was stated that the choir occupied three whole seats.

An Overture was sent to the General Assembly protesting against Presbyteries being composed of ministers only. I find that there is a leaning in that direction now. Committees of Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly are composed in the proportion of three ministers and two elders, or if the number is smaller, two ministers and one elder.

In 1852 there was more agitation for a new church.

In 1853 first mention is made of the de-

gree of D.D. being conferred, Rev. Cyrus Johnson being the recipient of the honor from the University of North Carolina.

In 1854 the total membership was 154, there being 60 families enrolled. In this year, the church contributed to Foreign and Domestic Missions \$262.00; the Congregational Expenses were \$1,353.00; and Miscellaneous \$382.00. We are impressed by the record that \$354.00 was contributed to Austin College in Texas.

In 1855 the pastor, Dr. Cyrus Johnson, died, having completed a term of nine years of most efficient and successful service.

In the same year Rev. T. P. Johnson became the preacher for March, April and May. In July, Dr. A. W. Miller became pastor.

There followed a number of cases of discipline which were handled with justice as well as mercy. Two members, under fire of discipline, asked that their names be dropped from the rolls of the church since they were convinced they had never been converted. This was done.

The Session at this time must have been surprised as well as rejoiced to receive \$105.00 anonymously, to be used in the cause of Christ, for this was a generous gift in those days.



Spire of First Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, N. C.
which was built in 1857 and remains intact today
as originally constructed

Evidence of the important place held by the Sunday School is shown by the fact that in 1856 the Session declared that the members should visit the Sunday School and stay through the full time. As an aside, one notes that Dr. Miller, the pastor, seems to have made all the motions in the meetings of the Session, slightly reminding us of some others.

In April, 1856, the membership had grown to 156; Congregational Expenses were \$1,-150.00 and Benevolences \$1,129.00.

In 1857, a salary of \$2,000.00 was promised Dr. Miller. Discipline was still abounding and the statement is made that one of the Elders was called before the Session for traveling on Sunday, but he gave exonerating reasons and was excused. Elders were required to give excuses for absence from Session meetings, which were often held at 9 o'clock in the morning, from Prayer Meeting and from the monthly Concert of Prayer. The Clerk was expressly ordered to report absences and call for excuses. During a period when discipline was in full flower six months reports were torn out of the record.

In April, 1857, the total enrollment, including nine colored members, was 182. The desire for a new church had been developing consistently and the total collections were

\$11,405.00 that year, much of this doubtless having been raised for the new church which was completed in 1857. There now remain of that church the front of the building and the spire.

The first six months of 1857 the pulpit was vacant, Dr. Miller having resigned as pastor to accept a call to the Tabb Street Church in Petersburg, Virginia. Rev. Alexander Sinclair was called, and accepting, began his first pastorate. The Church now occupied a position of commanding influence. We are glad to read that slaves were frequently received into its membership and the east side of the Gallery was allotted to them.

By 1859 the Church had 194 members upon its rolls, and the Sunday School numbered 140. Congregational and other expenses amounted to \$15,000, while more than \$800.00 was contributed to benevolences. Unusual interest in the Church and its work was shown in the early part of this year but this is said to have subsided to a certain extent later. Proof of the increase of the missionary spirit is given in the fact that a colored Sunday School, with 60 members, was conducted by the Church. The Session requested the Synod to overture the General Assembly, meeting in Rochester, N. Y., to order the Churches to pay their representa-

tives' expenses to Presbytery and to Synod, the representatives having up to that time paid their own expenses.

The Session recorded a protest to the effect that since cold, rain, heat and mud offered no impediment to business engagements they should not effectually bar the way to Prayer Meeting and night service.

In 1860 the Congregational Expenses were set down as \$3,318.00 and Benevolences \$1,379.00 and excuse is made that paying off the debt on the new church caused a reduction in benevolences.

In 1861 great political excitement is mentioned as affecting the Church activities unfavorably. Civil unrest is again referred to later in the year but no other reference is made in that year to the war which was in progress. The meetings of the Session, Presbytery and Synod went on as usual. More stringent rules were enacted to insure the presence of officers at the Session and Prayer Meeting and Concert of Prayer, and any member refraining from coming twice in succession was waited upon by two members of the Session.

In 1862 the only reference to the war was that Thanksgiving and Prayer and Fast Days had been appointed by the Civil Authorities and carefully observed.

The Church was again without a pastor, and preaching was supplied twice a month by Dr. Kirkpatrick, President of Davidson College, as Stated Supply. A glimpse of the suffering and privations of the time is given by the recorded fact that the Session took action for relief work in Wilmington Presbytery from the effects of the war and yellow fever.

There were no additions to the church in 1863 on profession of faith, and the contributions were greatly reduced. The country was torn by Civil War, and excitement and confusion possessed the minds of the people. At this unhappy time the church was without a pastor, but there was preaching regularly.

In 1864 Rev. Alexander Sinclair again became pastor. Congregational expenses were \$2,526.00 and benevolences \$4,175.00. It is only natural to suppose that some of this, at least, was paid in Confederate bills.

Another insight into the deplorable conditions at that time is given by a statement made by the Session that the war was very distracting and did not deepen the spirituality of the congregation.

The same year Dr. Alexander Sinclair resigned as pastor because of sickness and the tie as pastor was severed the second time.



Remodeled Manse of the First Presbyterian Church,
Charlotte, N. C.

In March, 1865, Rev. J. T. Leftwich was called as Stated Supply.

In July of that year Dr. A. W. Miller was engaged to hold a protracted meeting, and was elected Stated Supply, and in October is spoken of as the "newly elected pastor," this second pastorate continuing until 1892.

There follow now the last years of the Civil War, with hardships and distress as the result of war and reconstruction.

In 1867 there were 12 additions on examination, and 34 by letter, giving a total membership of 212 with 30 colored communicants. The Sunday School was well attended and there was, also, a good Sunday School for colored children.

In September, 1871, three Deacons met with the Session to canvass the question of a Second Presbyterian Church, and a committee was appointed to visit and converse with the congregation about this.

In November, 1871, sites and prices were asked for this church. In 1872 the church was reported free from debt and the recommendation was made that immediate steps be taken to build a manse by taking sufficient stock in building and loan associations to yield \$4,500.00 for this purpose.

In September, 1873, request was made that Presbytery call a meeting to organize the

Second Presbyterian Church and in October a number of members were dismissed to unite with this Church, which has grown to be one of the very large churches of the Assembly.

In 1873 a request from the Session for a City Missionary was disapproved by the Presbytery. In October of this year pews which had doors and numbers were surrendered by owners and became free.

In January, 1874, General D. H. Hill, who had been one of the most distinguished commanders of the Confederate Army, was elected Superintendent of a Mission School of this church. This was one of a number of missions for white people and of missions for colored people maintained in various sections of Charlotte, in which this Church has always been interested.

The Legislature was petitioned to stop the running of all trains on the Sabbath Day. The choir was instructed to be careful to use only music of a strictly devotional character.

In 1877 the Deacons were asked to set aside \$150.00 for expenses of the Church Sunday School and \$50.00 for the Mission School, but the subsequent note stated that the subscriptions would not justify this and

requested the Session to order a special collection in the church to meet the expense.

In 1878 the Deacons asked that a committee be appointed to secure the aid of three ladies to assist in raising money to pay the debt on the manse, but shortly afterwards it was reported that the whole amount was raised.

The Session made request that the authorities at Davidson College prevent the Students' Ball which was to be held in Charlotte on Friday night of commencement week.

The First Presbyterian Church has always had most efficient ushers. At a certain time, this office was performed by the sexton, Mr. L. A. Blackwelder, who was one of the city policemen, a man considerably over six feet tall and of slender build. He usually wore, when serving as an usher, an elaborate policeman's uniform with double rows of brass buttons, and a coat-tail longer than Dr. Johnson's. You can imagine the impression made upon a young man escorting a young lady to the night service for the first time, when at the Church door he came face to face with a policeman who immediately led him and his blushing companion up the center aisle and one look from Mr. Blackwelder would disabuse his mind of any idea of dropping into a back seat when the usher had



Old Colonial Burying Ground viewed from the Northwest side of
the First Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, N. C.



selected one higher up. Messrs. Harvey H. Orr and M. P. Pegram, Jr., were made assistant ushers but were not allowed in the middle aisle.

In 1866 a number of men in the church formed a society to be known as the "Men's Missionary Society of the First Presbyterian Church," the object being to increase interest in foreign missions. We are of the opinion that this was the first Men's Society in the Southern Church, and it has had a continuous and successful life.

A communication from the Deacons stated that inasmuch as Dr. Miller did so much mountain mission work, they should discontinue support of a Special Missionary in the mountains, and that the \$800.00 now used for that purpose should be supplied on the salary of an assistant pastor. They, also, requested the Session to put a stop to so many Special collections as it worked against the regular collections. Further, they protested against the custom of using special pews, and asked that the people move to the front, leaving the back seats for later arrivals.

In 1888 hearty endorsement was made of a Presbyterian Hospital, and the idea of a paid choir was favored. It was an unusually liberal year. They appointed a committee

to investigate the advisability of using electric lights.

In 1889 the joint meeting of Elders and Deacons considered the location of a Synodical Orphanage, and discussed the question of a Third Presbyterian Church. In this year Rev. Edward Mack was engaged to supply the Church during Dr. Miller's absence in Europe during the summer.

In 1892 Dr. Miller died. He was a great man, a contemporary of Drs. B. M. Palmer and J. L. Girardeau, and like them distinguished for scholarship and eloquence in the pulpit. His sentences rolled in such grandeur and stirring power that even words of his discourse remained in the minds of his hearers for years afterwards. To waken memories in the minds of some who have heard him, I give the following paragraphs from one of his sermons:

"All around the horizon there are forebodings of a coming storm which may wrap the whole world in darkness. It is idle to urge that all these dangers have always more or less existed. It is the universal feeling of Christendom that such a combination and marshalling of all the forces of evil against the Kingdom of God never before existed.

“The partial revivals in the Church that here and there occur, even if these were genuine, bear but little proportion to the mighty and widespread revivals that now mark the kingdom of darkness. The season of temptation that will try all them that dwell upon the earth has come. The true Church of God will be no loser but a gainer by it. She comes out of the furnace purer than before. As it was at the beginning of the new dispensation, so doubtless, will it be seen again. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the world convened at Jerusalem. * * * Life from the dead: which it could not be if, as some suppose, society and the Church shall be in a continual ascending scale, culminating at last in Millenial purity and splendor. No! There must first be a condition of *death*—spiritual death, social death, civil death, political death—before that grandest of all events takes place, the Restoration of Israel which shall be to the world ‘Life from the dead!’ So wonderful will its effects be that the Apostle compares them to the changes that shall be witnessed at the Resurrection Day!

“Oh, then! let us fervently supplicate the God of Israel to hasten that auspicious era and let us look forward in the confi-



First Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, N. C., and Lawn
Comprising a Whole City Block.

dence of faith and the assurance of hope to that happy time when Jew and Gentile shall together rejoice in the blessings of one common, transcendent, blood-bought Salvation and with united hands place the crown upon the Saviour's brow and with united tongues, hail him Lord of All."

After Dr. Miller's death, Reverend Edward Mack supplied the Church acceptably for a year, and was given a call to become the pastor, which he declined. He was a brilliant young man of great promise and won the affection of the people. His youth was extreme. Graduated from Davidson College when seventeen years of age, he was barely twenty-one when supplying the pulpit of the First Church.

In 1893 Reverend John A. Preston, D.D., of Lexington, Va., at that time pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Florence, Ala., accepted a call to the church. He died in Lexington September, 1896, having given the First Presbyterian Church the last 3½ years of his life. In 1894, during Dr. Preston's pastorate, it was decided to remodel the church and erect a Sunday School building. This proved to be a much larger undertaking than at first intended, as the record shows that everything was made new except the front of the church and

the spire. Also, in connection with memory of Dr. Preston's ministry, we recall the circumstance that at that time a charity association for the City was formed at a union meeting of the churches. In the beauty of holiness, Dr. Preston lived his life among us and preached a gospel winsome and true. The nobility and courtesy of his bearing in the pulpit distinguished him as the gentleman of culture, representative of the best the Christian South has produced. No man who has lived in Charlotte in this generation has ever been so greatly beloved. He so endeared himself to traveling men by his deep interest in their welfare, that they erected a memorial window to perpetuate his memory. As indicative of the spirit in which they placed the memorial in the Church, they chose as subject John, the Beloved Disciple.

Dr. James R. Howerton, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Norfolk, came to the church in 1897. A man of learning and tremendous mental power, Dr. Howerton preached sermons which deeply impressed thoughtful members of his congregation. He was one of the really great men of the pulpit of his time. In 1906, the Committee on Closer Relations of the Reformed and Presbyterian Churches in America met in this church in March, Dr. Howerton being a



Detail of Main Structure First Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, N. C.



member of this Committee. In October of that year Dr. Howerton resigned his pastorate to engage in the organization of Montreal, this undertaking having been provided for by the General Assembly, and he was succeeded by Dr. William M. Kincaid.

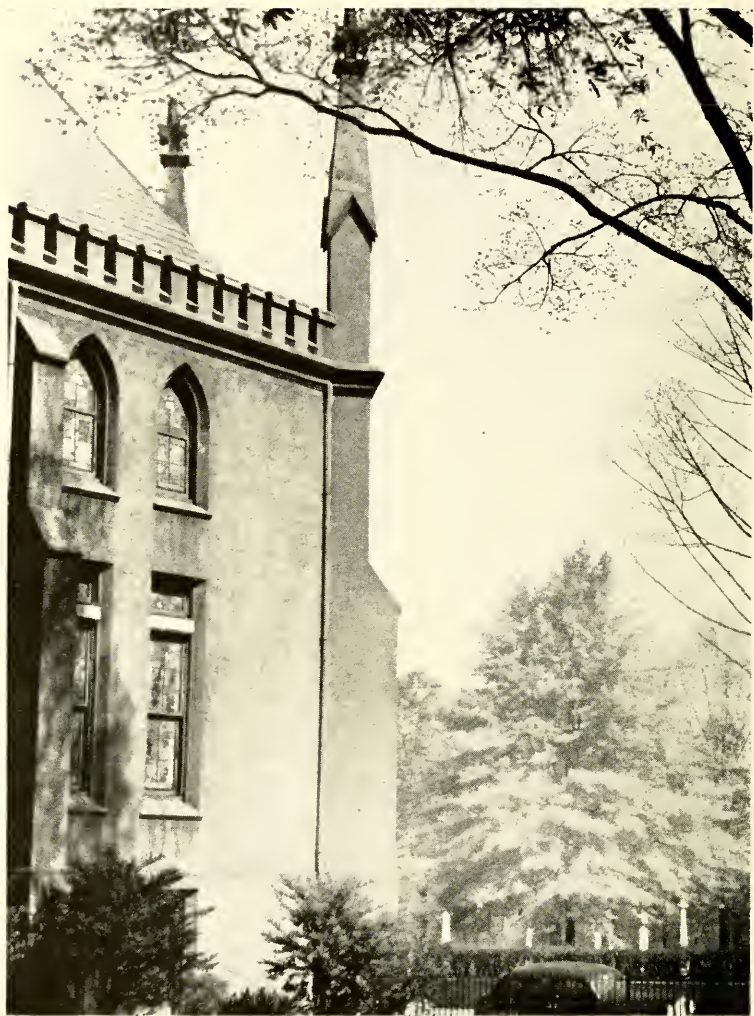
The appealing beauty of Dr. Kincaid's sermons will not be forgotten. A man of wide culture and delightful personality, he was the perfect pastor, ministering to the sick with thoughtful sympathy and generosity, and having a heart ever ready to make room for the stranger in the blessing of friendship. He died in 1912.

Dr. D. H. Rolston, the next pastor, came to the First Church full of youthful enthusiasm and energy. A brilliant student, he had won honors in his college days and his intellectual powers showed themselves in the high standard of his sermons, in which he gave promise of becoming one of the outstanding preachers of his day. A man of deep piety and unswerving loyalty to the truth of the Gospel, he spoke without fear or favor. A splendid personal trait which won for him many hearts was his wonderful capacity for deep and enduring friendships. Serving with sacrificial devotion among the soldiers in camp in Charlotte during the great war, he contracted meningitis and in a few days

passed on to his great reward. His death occurred in December, 1917.

In 1918 Dr. Albert Sidney Johnson, pastor of South Highlands Church in Birmingham, Ala., became the pastor. Though there may be a slight embarrassment in speaking in the presence of one whom we would estimate, we feel an impulse to present a bouquet to our pastor, the blessing of whose ministry we still enjoy. With one accord, we would commend his courageous proclamation of the truth of God's word and his joyous anticipation of the coming of our Blessed Lord, in the glory of His Almighty Power. Of his kindness and sustaining faith and sympathy in sickness and sorrow, many of us can testify.

This church has had the great blessing of having two of her lovely daughters volunteer for God's service in the foreign mission field. Leila Beaty and Maude Carson. Leila Beaty offered herself for service in China, but, while fitting herself for the work, she died in Columbia, S. C., in 1916. Maude Carson went to China in January, 1923, and worked in our mission school in Suchow until January, 1927, when she returned to this country on account of the Executive Committee's decision to bring back missionaries whose lives were in danger because of



First Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, N. C.
With old Colonial Burying Ground.
Viewed from the Southeast side of the church.



Old Colonial Burying Ground viewed from the Southeast side of
the First Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, N. C.

the disturbed conditions resulting from the war. She married Rev. Wm. C. Cumming of our Kiangzu Mission in November, 1927. In God's service as a pastor's wife, she died in Henderson in January, 1929.

Five sons of the First Presbyterian Church have gone into the ministry, Walter W. Moore, who became president of Union Seminary, Walter M. Walsh, Clyde Walsh, Edmonds Brown and R. H. Morrison Brown.

The editor has judged it appropriate to give here Dr. Robert A. Dunn's recollections of Dr. Walter W. Moore, written for Rev. J. Gray McAllister's book entitled "The Life and Letters of Walter W. Moore, Second Founder and First President of Union Theological Seminary in Virginia."

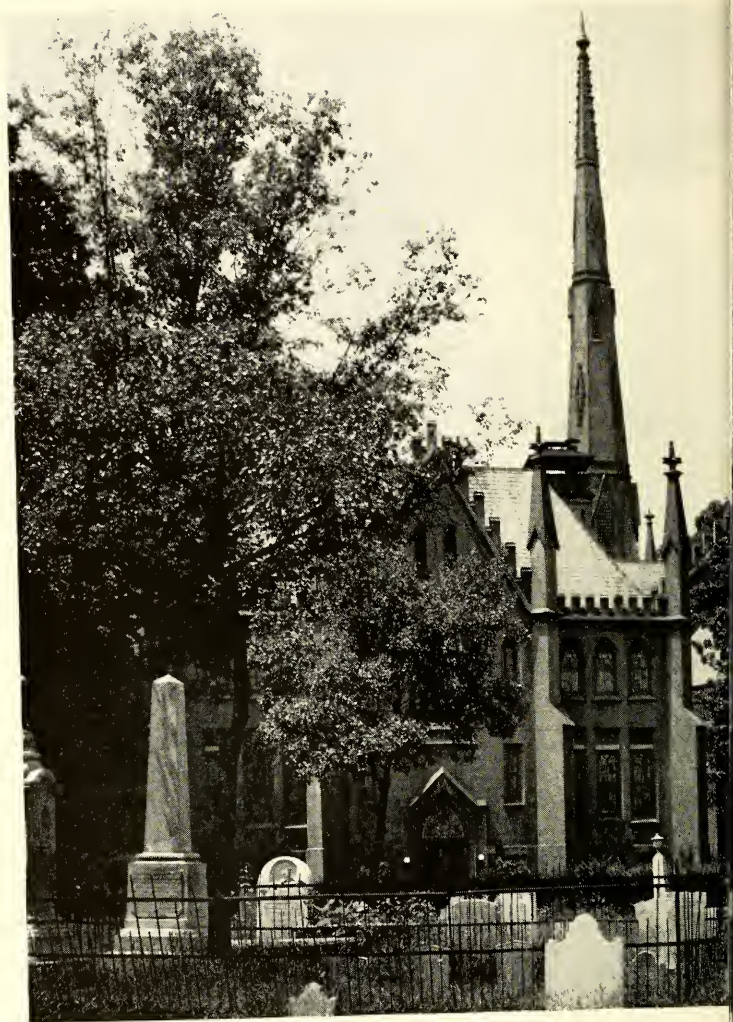
"My friendship with Dr. Walter W. Moore had its beginning in my childhood. We lived in the same neighborhood in Charlotte, N. C., and I seem to have known him always, for while there are vivid memories of incidents in my association with him, I cannot recall a first meeting or impression. The friendship extends back into that period of earliest childhood, when there is not a continuity of recollection, but detached, radiant events remain in the memory.

"There was the fishing trip, which holds first place in importance, if not in time.

One of memory's highest lights is of that day when, all equipped with the accoutrements of the fisherman's art, I went with him for a day's happiness. He was some years older but that fact did not seem to diminish his pleasure and certainly tremendously increased mine. With utmost kindness, without condescension, he shared the joys of the sport with his little comrade who followed on shorter legs. Here was a characteristic as noble as rare: he had always kindness and consideration for younger boys.

"He had abundant resources within himself, and his wit and humor, his stories and songs, were entertainment for a host of boys. When he read a story aloud it was a memorable experience to his audience and the charming expression of his face as he read increased manifold the pleasure of listening. His noble and illuminating manner of reading the Scriptures, which in later years was the wonder and joy of the whole Southern Presbyterian Church, was the development of a natural gift.

"He had not only the power of entertaining, to a high degree, but he possessed those traits of personality and character which attached others to him in admiration and affection. He was a handsome big boy as he



Rear View of The First Presbyterian Church from the
Old Colonial Burying Ground.



was in his maturity one of the handsomest men I have ever known.

"The intimate association of that early time was interrupted by long periods of separation, but our friendship grew with the years. A correspondence is favorable to the growth of friendship and in our exchange of letters there was a continuation of the understanding and close relationship of boyhood. He was a master of the attractive art of conveying his meaning in perfect English, and letters from him in his beautiful handwriting, individual and delightful, are a memory to be cherished through a lifetime. When he was a guest in my home, on his visits to Charlotte, we had opportunity for renewed expression of friendship, and long hours of delightful fellowship strengthened the bonds formed in youth.

"Listening to him as he preached in the old First Presbyterian Church which we both had attended in boyhood, I felt not only the inspiration which came from listening to a man of his spirituality and exalted gifts, but deep pride and happiness in the power and attainments of the noble-hearted boy who had won my admiration and affection in childhood.

"The many high honors which were bestowed upon him by his fellowmen as tributes

to his greatness never destroyed the humility of his nature and the modesty of his demeanor in the relationship with others. The grace and beauty of his bearing were always marked characteristics. As in his youth, he had still utmost kindness and consideration for those who followed on shorter legs."

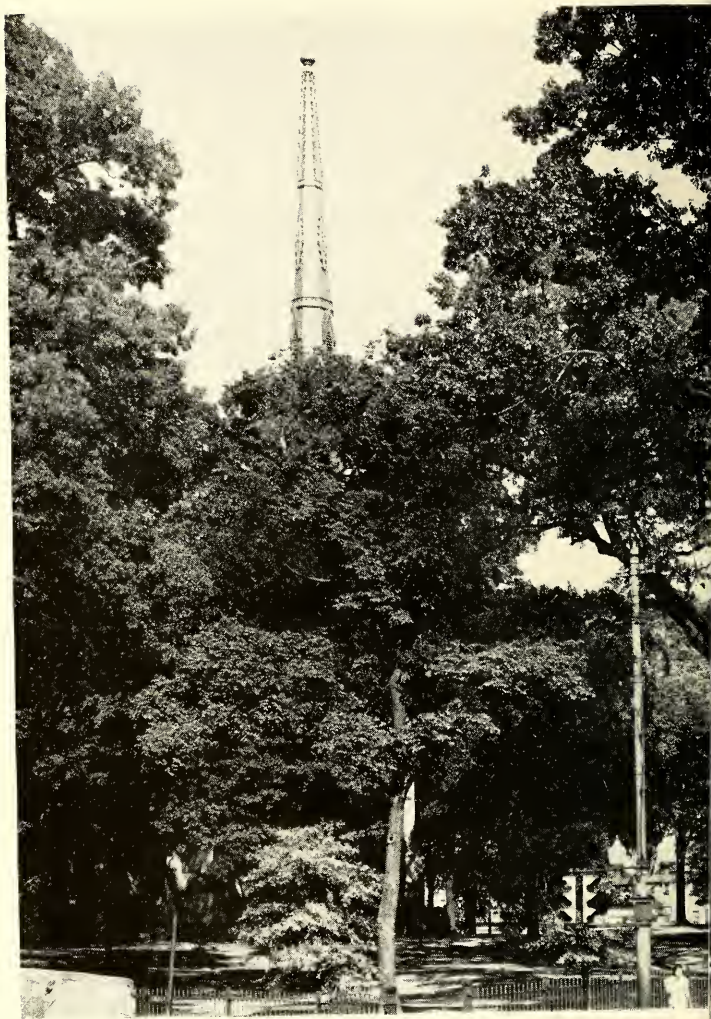
In 1896 the First Presbyterian Church aided in the movement to build a new church in Dilworth. New pews were provided for the First Church in this year, and the old pews were sold to the Mount Holly Church but afterwards were given to them as a present.

In 1903 this church inaugurated a movement to build a church in Seversville and furnished a large part of the funds.

In 1915 more commodious quarters were needed for our Sunday School. A gift of \$20,000.00 was made for this purpose by one of our elders, Mr. J. C. Burroughs, and the present Sunday School building was erected.

In 1931 Camp Green Church was organized. This was the outcome of a mission Sunday School, which this church had conducted for a number of years. The Camp Green Church now uses a commodious church building which the First Presbyterian Church erected and owns.

The report of the First Presbyterian



"Brave old oaks—still flourishing,
When a hundred years are gone,"
in the First Presbyterian Church yard, Charlotte, N. C.



Church to the General Assembly in May, 1932, gives the number of members as eleven hundred and the contributions, \$56,484.00.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States has held three Annual Meetings in our Church—in 1864, 1887 and 1920.

The long line of God-loving and God-fearing men who have ministered in the pastorate of the First Presbyterian Church have been characterized by their ability in the pulpit, by their spirituality and by their loyalty to God's word.

Thus, we have come to the First Presbyterian Church of Charlotte of the present day. Similarly, tracing the origins of hundreds of other churches which lift their spires above the smoke and noise of our cities and amid the peace and beauty of flourishing country settlements of today, we see God's providence at work through the decades of our history. At preaching points, far removed from each other, small groups have met for worship. Gathering strength, they have built churches, developed in service, stewardship and spirituality, and when members of pioneer spirit have moved farther out on the far-flung line of the nation's progress, they too, have in their turn, established preaching points which have developed

after the pattern of the Mother Church. In never-ending succession, these churches have come, developing and sending forth their colonies to form congregations of like character and spirit.

The following verse of Cowper's, used by Dr. Miller in one of his sermons, expresses in the form of a prayer thoughts suggested by a study of the history of the First Presbyterian Church of Charlotte.

“Savior, I love to trace
Throughout the Sacred Page
The Foot-steps of Thy Grace,
The same in every age.
Oh! Grant that I may faithful be
To clearer light vouchsafed to me.”

